593 handling the potential conflict between father and son and the successive generations which they represent; these are mechanisms which preclude intimacy between the father and the son. The social statuses of father and son are not 593 852 585 [831] permitted to overlap by their being participants in, or even present at, festive occasions, such as circumcision and wedding parties, occasions which are marked by erotic poems and lewd songs. It would be "wrong" for a father to accompany his son to one of these parties. In the one instance that I did observe a father and son together at a wedding party, the Bedouins explained the rare occurrence by pointing out that this was the man's only son, and so he treated him "like a brother."

593 •866 The Bedouins of al-Qasr recognize the aloofness of the father from the son and justify it as a training period to prepare the boy for the time when he will be on his own. One young man explained the underlying rationale of the father-son relationship in this way:

> There are different kinds of fathers. One wishes to make his son a man, to make his son self-dependent at an early age. Other fathers destroy the personalities of their sons. For instance, the first type of father gives his son the responsibility of selling something, or buying something, or of supervising a chore in his own place. But the second type of father is usually soft with his son; he doesn't depend on his son due to his young age. He is very cautious with him and will not send him anywhere, and if he does he will ask someone to look after him. Of course, the first type of father is good and the second type is bad.